



## Department of Veterans Affairs

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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### CARES Commission To Hold Hearings

On Tuesday, August 12, 2003, at 9:00 a.m., the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission will hold a public hearing at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel in Baltimore, MD. The purpose of this hearing is for Commissioners to hear the testimony of network leadership, elected officials, veterans organizations, and other invited stakeholder groups on the national Department of Veterans Affairs initiative called CARES.

The CARES Commission was created by the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide an independent perspective on plans to realign and allocate capital assets to better meet the health care needs of veterans over the next 20 years. The Commission will review planning materials, seek stakeholder input, and develop written recommendations to be presented to the Secretary in October 2003.

“The CARES Commission will review the VA’s capital asset needs and ensure that the concerns of veterans and other stakeholders are fully addressed,” said Dr. James J. Nocks, director of the VA Capitol Health Care Network. “The commission has received recommendations prepared by VA’s Under Secretary for Health in the form of a draft National CARES Plan. They will hold up to 40 hearings across the country to receive input from veterans organizations, elected officials, health care affiliates, network leadership, community groups and others.”

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The hearing at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront will examine VA health care issues throughout the VA Capitol Health Care Network, which includes Washington, DC, Baltimore, Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Martinsburg, West Virginia. These issues include the projected increased demand for VA outpatient care and how the VA Capitol Health Care Network will respond to this demand in the coming years.

“The Commission Hearings are a formal process and are different from our typical stakeholder meetings. There will be no Q&A period and only those who are invited by the Commission to be on a panel will actually speak,” said Dr. Nocks. “But we want folks to attend and hear the testimonies.”

“Additionally, anyone can submit their own comments, in writing, to the Commission. Your comments will carry the same weight as those who give oral testimony,” said Dr. Nocks. “Staff members from the VA Capitol Health Care Network will be on hand before and after the hearing to assist those who wish to submit written comments about the draft National CARES Plan.”

There will be a complimentary shuttle service available to the CARES Commission Hearing at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel from Martinsburg, WV, and Washington, DC, VA Medical Centers. To reserve space on the shuttle or for additional information about the CARES Commission Hearing, please call the CARES Hotline for VISN 5 at 1-800-463-6295, ext. 7384. The Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel is located at 700 Aliceanna Street in Baltimore, MD. For directions to the hearing, please contact the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel at 410-385-3000.

Veterans and other stakeholders who cannot attend the hearing, can send their comments directly to the Commission by via the Commission website at [www.carescommission.va.gov](http://www.carescommission.va.gov). If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the CARES Hotline for the VA Capitol Health Care Network at 1-800-463-6295, ext. 7384.

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“These hearings and the input from veterans and stakeholders will be very important in the overall process and will play a big role in the final outcome,” said Dr. Nocks. “CARES simply cannot be successful without your input.”

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Brief biographies of each commission member are attached. For more information on the CARES process, please see <http://www.va.gov/CARES>.

## **CARES Commission Members Brief Biographies**

### **Charles Battaglia**

Mr. Battaglia has more than 35 years of service in the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. From 1997 to 2000, he served as the staff director of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs where he directed authorization, oversight, and legislative activities for veterans' health care and benefits. From the mid-1980s to 1997, Mr. Battaglia served as a senior staff member and staff director of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence where he directed congressional oversight of all intelligence agencies. Battaglia also had an extensive career as a naval officer.

### **Joseph E. Binard, MD, FRCSC**

Dr. Joseph Binard is a senior staff research consultant in Bioengineering and a clinical instructor of urology at the University of Wisconsin and was an associate clinical professor of Urology at the University of South Florida at Tampa until 2000. He also serves as a consulting urologist for the Oneida Tribe Clinic, Oneida, Wisconsin. A retired Navy captain, Dr. Binard served as commanding officer in Iceland and Norfolk, Virginia. Prior to retiring from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 1996, he served as national director of the Spinal Cord Injury Program, Washington, D.C. and chief of Spinal Cord Injury Service at the VA medical centers in Hampton, Virginia and Tampa, Florida.

### **Raymond Boland**

Mr. Boland, a Vietnam War veteran, served in the US Army for 30 years. He has served as the secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs since 1992. As secretary, he oversees support to Wisconsin's one-half million veterans through a wide-range of programs including loans, grants, health care, and cemetery operations. He is also recognized as a national advocate for ending homelessness among veterans.

Mr. Boland is the current president of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs. This association provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas among state veterans organizations, facilitates reciprocal state services, and seeks to secure uniformity, equality, and efficiency in providing services to veterans in all U.S. states and territories.

### **Chad Colley**

Mr. Colley has served in numerous positions with veterans associations, including the National Commander of the Disabled American Veterans. During Vietnam, Colley was serving as commanding officer of an infantry company in the famed 101st Airborne Division, when he stepped on a mine. He lost both legs and an arm. Three days after he'd undergone surgery, he wrote a letter to his wife, "Even though I'm banged up pretty good, I'm still me. I have a big challenge to undertake now." Some years later, Colley was selected by President Reagan as

Handicapped American of the Year, and for nearly three decades has been a public speaker for corporate, governmental and civic entities across the country, often on issues concerning disabled Americans. Additionally, he is an avid skier, former U.S. Disabled Ski Team member and a double Gold Medallist from the Albertville, France Paralympics. Following a 28 year career as a real estate broker, he located to his current home in New Smyrna Beach, Florida where he lives with his wife of 35 years Betty Ann Colley.

**Vernice Ferguson, RN, M.A., F.A.A.N., F.R.C.N.**

Ms. Ferguson was a senior fellow in the School of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, holding the Fagin Family Chair in Cultural Diversity from 1993-1996. Prior to this position, she served for 12 years as the assistant chief medical director for nursing programs in the VA. In this assignment she was responsible for more than 60,000 nursing personnel. She also served as the chief nurse at two VA medical centers and as chief of the nursing department at the Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health.

Ms. Ferguson is the recipient of eight honorary doctorates and two fellowships, one in physics, and one in alcohol studies. She was the first chairperson of the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA) Foundation, which supports scholarships and research grants for VA nurses.

**Richard McCormick, PhD**

Dr. McCormick is currently in private practice in Hudson, Ohio. He also consults on quality assurance issues in mental health. Dr. McCormick served the Department of Veterans Affairs from 1972 to 2002 in a variety of positions related to the mental health field, including director of the Mental Health Care Line for the VA Health Care System of Ohio and Co-Chair of the Under Secretary for Health's committee on the Care of Veterans with Serious Mental Illness. He continues to participate in Health Services Research programs on providing care for patients with mental disorders and substance abuse.

**Sister Patricia Vandenberg, CSC**

Sister Vandenberg is currently the Director of the Health Care MBA program at Baldwin-Wallace College in Ohio. She served as the president and chief executive officer for Holy Cross Health System, South Bend, Indiana from 1989 to 2000. In that role Sister Vandenberg headed one of the largest and oldest Catholic health systems with more than 30,000 employees and consisting of hospitals, long term care and residential facilities, ambulatory, diagnostic and surgery centers, and auxiliary enterprises, including a college of nursing, an insurance and benefits administration company and a physician practice management company.

Sister Vandenberg holds a master of health administration from Duke University, pursued graduate theological studies at the University of Notre Dame and has a bachelor of science in nursing from Hunter College of the City University of New York. She belongs to numerous professional organizations and has published and spoken on health care issues around the world.

### **Jo Ann K. Webb, RN, MHA**

Ms. Webb is currently the Director of Federal Relations and Policy for the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), a subsidiary of the American Hospital Association. Ms. Webb has held two presidential appointments as the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning and as the Director of the National Cemetery System for the Department of Veterans Affairs. She is the former Legislative Director for Senator Tim Hutchinson (R-AR) and the former Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Health, for the House Veterans Affairs Committee. She also served as a consultant and Director of Health Policy for the Paralyzed Veterans of America. Ms. Webb served as an Army Nurse and holds a BS degree from Penn State University and a Masters in Health Administration from George Washington University.

Ms. Webb was awarded the Army Commendation Medal and the Exceptional Service Award from the Department of Veterans Affairs. She is an Alumni Fellow of Penn State University. Ms. Webb is a member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives, the American College of Health Care Executives and the Society of Sponsors of the United States Navy. She is the sponsor of the USS Abraham Lincoln, an aircraft carrier home ported in San Francisco, CA.

### **Michael K. Wyrick, Major General, USAF, Ret.**

General Wyrick has 34 years of leadership and management experience in complex health care operations. He served as the deputy surgeon general of the Air Force Medical Service from 1997 until his retirement in 1999. He currently is executive director of a nonprofit association of 13 hospitals in northern Virginia the mission of which is to improve emergency preparedness and counter-terrorism measures in northern Virginia.

In addition, General Wyrick has been President, National Capital Region Emergency Response, a nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C. coordinating emergency preparedness efforts in the National Capital Region. Prior to that, he was Vice President for Emergency Preparedness, District of Columbia Hospital Association. He has been the administrator of community and regional hospitals and a major medical center in the Air Force. As Air Force deputy surgeon general, he was instrumental in downsizing and reengineering a 55,000-person healthcare organization providing care to 2.4 million beneficiaries. General Wyrick is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives and an Honorary Diplomat in the American Academy of Medical Administrators.

### **Al Zamberlan F.A.C.H.E.**

Mr. Zamberlan has an undergraduate degree from Franciscan University of Steubenville and a master degree in Health Care Administration from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1952 to 1958. Zamberlan has over 37 year of experience in health care management, consulting, strategic planning and new business development. From 1994 to 1996, he served as vice president of strategic planning for Lockheed Martin Information Management Service, where he worked with VA on major automation efforts.

Zamberlan served in VA from 1962 to 1994 in a variety of positions including the Veterans Health Administration regional director for both the Central Region and the Great Lakes Region. As regional director, he oversaw the operation of numerous medical centers and clinics in each multi-state region. He has also served as director at three VA medical centers. He is a life member of the American College of Health Care Executives (ACHE).